ARMY & THE CUMBERLAND THE Great Central Campaign

The Important Position of Kentucky and Tennessee.

By JOHN McELROY.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CHATTANOOGA AT LAST.

Rosecrans Halts Before an Immense

The Army of the Cumberland, at the homa and expelling him from Middle reasons and pretexts for the problem and a task of even more ginumerous railroad bridges between Tuiproblem and a task of even more gigantic proportions. Bragg's great army, lahoma and the Tennessee had all been

come up on the Army of the Cumber-land's left flank.

Halleck's Impatience. Problem—Bragg Apparently Immovable in a Mighty Stronghold—Rose-crans's Spiendid Strategy—Bragg Thoroughly Outwitted and Outmaneuvered—Chattanooga Falls Without a Battle.

Meanwhile Halleck was daily prodding Rosecrans to move forward energetically. He had Bragg on the run—keep it up. The Army of the Potomac had driven Lee out of Pennsylvania after the terrific battle of Gettysburg; Grant had captured Pembertan's whole states and the state of the state of Gettysburg; Grant had captured Pembertan's whole states and the state of the st Meanwhile Halleck was daily prod-Grant had captured Pemberton's whole army at Vicksburg. The Confederacy The Army of the Cumberland, at the was shaken to its foundations. It might be that a heavy blow by the Army of maneuvering the enemy out of Tulla- the Cumberland would send it toppling. As usual, Rosecraps had no end of reasons and pretexts for not being in a

SCENES OF OPERATIONS IN EAST TENNESSEE.

store of supplies against any interrup

cial narrow-gage locomotive built to run

100 to 250 feet high, as straight up and on the branch railroad connecting that from McMinnville—the third being left from as if built with a plumb-line and place with the main line. It took until

Again Rosecrans's strategic genius

upon his immediate front, Bragg was

would be in supporting distance of each

this idea in Bragg's mind by every pos-

wanted to wait until the corn was ripe Pelham, to Therman, in Sequatchie Val-

"The

rose like veritable walls clear to the tion of the railroad to his rear. He

walls of primeval rock, as solid and per-pendicular as those of great towers, alry. He wanted to make a great mag-

There were many miles of these, from azine at Tracy City, and needed a spe-

without a break by which they could be Aug. 12 to build this, and it was scarce-

some remote geologic period the mighty waters gathered in the broad valleys of lantly than in the Tullahoma campaign. Whatever fault may be found with Rosecrans in other respects, his strategy

ginia had burst through the rock walls elicits only unstinted praise. Again he

under the towering cliff of Lookout made a most exhaustive planning and Mountain.

ong months before it was able by a precedents, and he thought that Ros

The Army of the Cumberland might taught the Union commanders, Prob-have felt glad to exchange problems ably the strongest reason, however, was

Bragg had concentrated even a stronger alry and artillery-for the plec-

clouds. The crests of these were actual

There was one narrow gateway

through these glant barriers, where in

countered on the Chickahominy or the

gish stream, with wide swamps on eith-

er side and low bluffs beyond. On the

low bluffs with fortifications. The country was open and rolling. At Vicksburg

there were high bluffs overlooking the

daring stroke to gain the high land.

Cumberland had no thought of asking would any one to take its job off its hands. It other.

settled down along the line from Mc-Minnville to Winchester, began repairing

the railroad back to Murfreesboro to get

In the meanwhile the long-delayed

out this plan were enormous-beyond back of him, and kep! his small brigade

sufficient to fight two great battles, The Army Moves.

Early in August Halleck sent specific

description. In the first place, the army in constant motion so as to magnify his would have to get across the Tennessee numbers. During 'he daylight they description. In the first place, the army would have to get across the Tennessee River, a deep, rapid stream, upon which steamboats of considerable size ran. It was to be expected that Bragg would have it carefully guarded, and not permit its passage without severe fighting, into which a large part of his army would be confronted by Sand or Raccoon Mountain, a lofty range, with prectificus sides, and oak ready was the first preceding of the size of the start of the same Lookout Valley and Creek, beyond which rose the froming pallsades of Lookout Mountain, asome 1,200 feet above the surface of the Tennessee. There were but three passages across this—one a wagon road which would have to be considered that the same of the word of t The army was to take along with it army crossed at several points without rations for 25 days and ammunition any serious opposition.

Crossing the Tennessee.

While Wilder was making all this row orders to Rosecrans to move at once, but Rosecrans halted 10 days longer, and it and Hillsboro for the Sequatchie Valin front of Chattanooga, Crittenden ley. Crittenden sent one brigade to Poe's Crossroads, about 15 miles north of Chattanooga, and another brigade was sent to help Wilder maintain his

bobbery. Aug. 31 Crittenden was ordered to

Gen. Baird's at Bridgeport, Gen. Neg-ley's at Caperton's Ferry and Gen. Rey-nolds's at Shell Mound.

On the extreme right Gen. A. McD.
McCook, commanding the Twentieth
Corps, threw a pontoon bridge acr ss
the river at Caperton's Ferry; Heg's
Brigade of Davis's Division manned the
pontoons, rowed across the river, drove
away the enemy's pickets and advanced
to the top of Sand Mountain. The
bridge was then completed, the rest of
the division followed, and on the night
of Aug. 30 encamped on top of Sand
Mountain. Sheridan's Division helped
build a bridge at Bridgeport, and crossed the river, marching to Trenton, in
Lookout Valley. Johnson's Division
crossed at Caperton's Ferry, and the
corps as a whole crossed Sand Mountain into Lookout Valley, opposite
Winston's Gap, which is 42 miles from
Chattanooga, 25 miles from Caperton's
Ferry. 48 miles from Caperton's
Ferry, 48 miles from Dalton, Ga. The passage of Sand Mountain involved the
severest labor and the hauling up by
hand of the wagons and artillery. In
many places roads had to be cut out or
made by filling up gorges and cutting
down knobs. By Sept 6 all these movements had been completed, and the

LIBBY PRISON AS IT

be discreet, with no "leaky" qualities,
and could keep the secret from their
best friends. A general knowledge
throughout the prison of what was being done would have insured its failure.

The Work was begun one night after
lights out" by making a passage in the
lock of the fireplace in the kitchen, so
as to reach the cellar below, by digging
downward through the masonry work
of the chimney a hole large enough for
a man to descend to a flue on the opposite side. In this flue they hung a rude
kind of rope ladder, by which the workmen could pass up and down with comparative ease.

Every morning just before daylight
the workmen would come up and carefully replace the bricks in the back wall
of the chimney, so that all appearance
of an opening to the cellar was carefully concealed. A cooking-stove sat in
front. of the chimney, so that al down knobs. By Sept 6 all these move-ments had been completed, and the almost unburt, had retired to Chattanooga, behind a deep, navigable river,
and three great mountain chains, which
sarmy. He must also accumulate a
store of supplies against any infants. nooga, was concentrated in Lookout menced. The cellar was immediately Valley from Wauhatchie, six or seven under the prison hospital, and was used umns: Gen. Wood, from Hillsboro, by miles from Chattanooga, to Valley only for the storage of boxes, straw Pelham, to Therman, in Sequatchie Val-Head, 35 miles distant. The first part etc., and was never visited at night.

of the movement was now a magnifi-cent success, but the cloud-capped pal-the floor of the cellar, which made it isade of Lookout Mountain lay between about five feet under ground, by pick-"Gen. Van Cleve, with two brigades the army and Bragg in Chattanooga, ing the bricks and stones out of the from McMinnville—the third being left Bragg, however, had been demoralized thick wall until a hole was opened in garrison there—by the most practiby the apparition of this immense force large enough to admit the body of a cable route to Pikeville, the head of the Sequatchie Valley.

The appartion of this initial to the good-sized man, was, as he confessed to his subordinate "Col. Minty's cavalry to move on the left by Sparta, to drive back Dibrell's cavalry toward Kingston, where the enemy's mounted troops, under Forrest, along the river from Whitesburg to under the straw, with which the floor

were concentrated, and then, covering the left flank of Van Cleve's column, to Crossing Lookout Mountain proceed to Pikeville. Fourteenth Corps, Maj.-Gen. Geo. H. Thomas commanding, to move follows: rectly up the railroad and wagon road "Gen. Reynolds, from University, by around the nose of Lookout Mountain as follows:

To get at its enemy the Army of the detail carefully worked out. It was a gigantic game of chess, over a board through this narrow gateway, where brigades and batteries—infantry, cavarmy than that which he had fought so all moved with the utmost precision and

"Gen. Crittenden's Corps in three col-

"Gen, Palmer, from Manchester by

Sequatchie Valley.
"Col. Minty's cavalry to move on the

the most practicable route to Dunlap.

flercely at Perryville and Stone River.

It seemed a far more difficult problem than the Army of the Potomac had enand Stevensor

Army of the Tennessee at Vicksburg. wedded to the belief that Rosecrans On the Chickahominy there was a slug-McD. McCook commanding, to move Mountain as follows: done at Tullahoma. This would take him by the way of Sparts, the Cumber-Rappahannock there were merely the land Barrens, the Sequatchie Valley and

over the lofty wall of Walden's Ridge. It was by this route that Bragg had turned Buell's left the previous Sum-Creek to near Stevenson, "The three brigades of cavalry by ing its trains and artillery forward with the enterprise. Fayetteville and Athens, to cover the it, wide expanse of Mississippi swamps and mer, and its difficulty had made it un-morasses, cut up by an endless tangle of believable to Buell, in spite of all that line of the Tennessee from Whitesburg bayous and creeks. In this muddy maze Thomas could say. Bragg was the type Grant's army had wallowed for four of military men that believe devoutly in

"On his arrival in the Sequatchie Valley, Gen. Crittenden to send a bri-gade of infantry to reconnoiter the crans would follow the route he had Tennessee near Harrison's Landing, and take post at Poe's Crossroads. Minty have felt glad to exchange problems ably the strongest reason, however, was with either of its sister armies; but the that by so doing Rosecrans would touch to reconnoiter from Washington down and take post at Smith's Crssroads, and rule of war is for every one to attend elbows with Burnside advancing into to his own troubles. The Army of the East Tennessee, and the two armies Wilder's Brigade of mounted infantry o reconnoiter from Harrison's Landing Chattanooga and be supported by brigade of infantry, which Gen. Crit-Again Rosecrans carefully nourished tenden was to send from Therman to the foot of the eastern slope of W sible device. He sent Sheridan forward the railroad back to Autricesboro to get rations, and commenced deeply thinking to Bridgeport and Stevenson, with his how to crack this new and harder nut as successfully as it had the formidable one of Tuliahoma. There was no doubt onstrated down into Alabama as far as den's Ridge, in front of Chattanooga."

an alinement with the Army of the in the mind of any enlisted man that Huntsville, apparently for the same pur-in the end Bragg would be whipped and pose, while his establishment of a great Cumberland. driven out of Chattanooga, in spite of depot at Tracy City seemed to point this river and mountain walls. Though conclusively to a movement by the other the way it was going to be done was not er flank, and prisoners who were cap- as ordered, and executed with the

apparent, its certainty in the near fu-ture did not admit of discussion. tured were allowed to escape after sec-ling elaborate preparations for a move-er's and Minty's Brigades advanced ment across the mountains to Bragg's across the Sequatchie Valley, followe right.

Bragg became so sure of this that he called in Buckner from Knoxville to mit of Walden's Ridge, where they save him from the combined armies of came into plain sight of Chattanooga In the meanwhile the long-delayer fight.

Burnade capedition to relieve the hero-lie loyalists of East Tenniessee was grief and the control of the transport of the proper designation of the combined armies of the limit of the Army of the Corps, and seed in the formation of the Ninth Corps, and, seed by their service in coming back to Kentucky, but the men were sally shattered by their service in coming back to Kentucky, but the men were sally shattered by their service in coming back to Kentucky, but the medical read, recuperation burg, and needed rest, and to make the Great Raider, Burgal and the Corps, and seed the State of the Ninth Corps were one expected that his first bodyla care so sure of this that he flags the control of the Ninth Corps were one extracted by their service in the Ninth Corps, and, seed in the Ninth Corps were one expected that his first bodyla care so sure of this that he flags the control of the Ninth Corps, and, seed in the control of the Ninth Corps, and, seed in the other half with the transport of the Ninth Corps, and seed the search of the Ninth Corps, and seed the Ninth Corps were some distance of the century from the search of the care of the control of the control

move down the valley and cross the Tennessee at Bridgeport, Shell Mound and Battle Creek. He crossed the river Sept. 3, and was then ordered to move directly up the railroad toward Chatta-

Ger. Thomas, of the Fourteenth Corps, sent Gen. Brannan's Division across the Tennessee at Battle Creek, On the extreme right Gen. A. McD.

Rosecrans at once issued orders for Crittenden to demonstrate strongly diway of Battle Creek, to take post con-cealed near its mouth. against Chattanooga, while Thomas should scale Lookout Mountain at John-"Gen. Brannan to follow him.
"Gen. Negley to go to Tantallon and crossed at Valley Head. Gen. Thomas halt on Crow Creek, between Anderson advanced Negley's Division to lead in and Stevenson. "Gen. Baird to follow him and camp Brigade led the division in the direction of Stevenson's Gap. The 18th Ohio suc-"The Twentieth Corps, Maj.-Gen. A. ceeded in reaching the top of Lookout cD. McCook commanding, to move Mountain beyond Payne's Mill, where they found the enemy's pickets and "Gen. Johnson by Salem and Larkin's drove them away, securing the forks of the road on the summit of the moun-

"Gen. Davis by Mount Top and Crow tain. The corps was closed up well, and by incredible labor succeeded in work-

THE LIBBY PRISON TUNNEL.

LIBBY PRISON AS IT APPEARED IN 1863-'64

tunnel

After reaching the cellar an opening

The Dirt Carrier.

was covered several inches deep; a large wooden spittoon was used for carrying the dirt off. As the work progressed

ropes were fastened to two sides of it, so that it could be drawn in and out of

the excavation. This work was neces sarily very slow, as the air would so

become impure and candles burn but a

few minutes at a time, the workmen being compelled to come out and allow

fresh air to flow in, as no method could

We were soon at the mouth of the

quickly followed. In order to get through it was necessity to lie flat

down and work one's self through in that position. About the middle of the

One man started in, and I followed. In order to get

At precisely 1:30 o'clock at night the party with whom I made my escape left the prison and passed out on the street, free men. There were five in our squad, made up of Maj. J. P. Col-lins and Capt. McCaslin Moore, of the 29th Ind.; Capt. John W. Lewis, of the 4th Ky. Cav.; Capt. Matthew Boyd and myself, of the 73d Ind. In the Street.

Upon reaching the street we moved off at a rapid walk until we got some distance from the prison, when we turn-ed our course to the northwest, passing by two or three hospitals, which were guarded, but fortunately the sentinels did not challenge us. Near one of these hospitals I met with a delay that came near causing me to lose my comrades. I was walking near the top of a small but very steep hill, over which straw had been emptied from the hospital beds. Stepping on this straw, it gave beds. way beneath me and I slipped to the bottom and before I could again get to the top my companions were out of sight—they had not missed me—and I

had hard work to overtake them. Out of Richmond at Last.

When near the outside of Richmond we left the main streets, believing they were picketed, and, going out through lots and byways, passed the fortifica-We struck the Virginia Central Railroad, and followed it north a few miles. intending, if possible, to pass entirely north of the forces that we believed lay east of Richmond. After leaving the railroad we struck into the woods, and as the night was dark, we fell over logs and stumps, got into thorn bushes and brambles and tore our clothes and were

enerally very uncomfortable.

By dawn we had made eight or nine miles, and as daylight was coming we were compelled to hunt a place of conealment, which we found very difficult, s there was no undergrowth to furnish a hiding place. We penetrated into the woods, but could not get out of sight. Everywhere we found ourselves too near some dwelling, and outhouses were unsafe. It was now fully light, and as we could go no further we crept into small forest in plain sight of a public road, along which we saw many persons pass during the day, and I believe our poor concealment was our safety, as no one thought it necessary to search in good where every tree and log appeared to be exposed.

A Raw, Cold Day.

The day was very raw and cold, and suffered greatly. It was the longest day I ever passed. It seemed as though day I ever passed. It seemed as though minutes were hours, as we lay flat on the ground, never speaking except in the lowest voice, shivering and anxious



MAP USED BY THE AUTHOR IN HIS ESCAPE.

kicks, when he retired a short distance, command, and I was relieved. How long that Each pa place seemed. I would have said it was relied upon his own judgment as to the course to pursue. I had succeeded the course to pursue. I had succeeded

The Exit. around the prison

side and completely wedging me fast, and longing for the shades of evening. My only chance to get loose was to Strange to say, I felt no hunger; anxiety back out a few feet, and as some one and mental strain had obliterated all was following close at my heels I was appetite, and I could not have eaten of compelled to give him a few vigorous the choicest food had it been at my

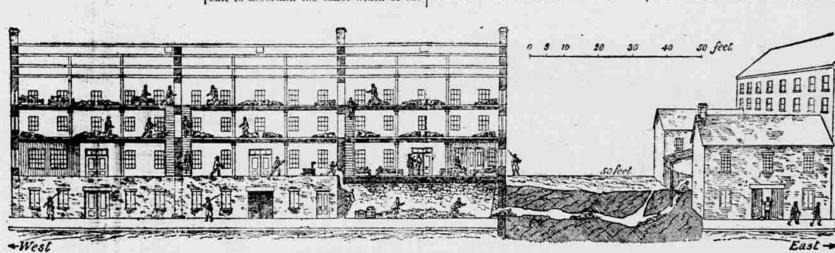
Each party on leaving the prison had 60 Ieet. The roar of the noise as we in prison in making an accurate copy of crawled through was to me like the sound of wagons in a covered bridge. proved of the greatest value.

The opening from the tunnel came up under an old shed with a plank fence beween the exit and the guard line the headward the line of the light we crossed the light was considered by the light was co the headwaters of the Chickahomin It.

Thus inch by inch the work progressed with the greatest secreey and caution. Careful watchfulness was kept up night and day to see that the plan was not discovered.

A Nearly Fatal Mistake.

On Sunday night. Feb. 7, an error occurred which nearly proved fatal to the enterprise. It had been very difficult to ascertain the exact width of the curious that had been sent to the prison-sions that had been sent to the prison-sions that had been sent to the prison-site direction. A large warehouse near this shed was used to store hundreds of boxes containing clothing and provisions that had been sent to the prison-sither said a word nor fired at us, and neither said a word nor fired at us, and vacant lot led from this shed to- River, and, wading its swamps until



SECTIONAL VIEW OF LIBBY PRISON AND TUNNEL